

Errol NH Fall Foliage & Scenic Drives Guide

Two days of scenic drives through New Hampshire's Great North Woods and western Maine, plus ideas for using Errol as an overnight stop on a longer fall road trip

DAY 1	DAY 2	TRAVELING THROUGH
Great North Woods, Dixville Notch , covered bridges and Thirteen Mile Woods.	Western Maine lakes, Height of Land and Grafton Notch .	Use Errol as an overnight link between northern New Hampshire, the White Mountains and western Maine.

Presented by Errol Motel

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How to Use This Guide

Use this guide as a starting point rather than a fixed schedule. Follow both featured loops for a two-day stay, choose one loop for a shorter visit, or combine the shorter drives and overnight-routing ideas to build a longer fall trip through northern New Hampshire and western Maine.

CHASE THE COLOR, NOT A DATE

Peak foliage changes from year to year. New Hampshire says the Great North Woods typically begins reaching peak color during the last week of September, while western Maine often peaks later. Check the current New Hampshire and Maine foliage reports before choosing the day's route.

Choose Your Drive

Classic northern New Hampshire	★ Day 1 – Great North Woods Fall Foliage Loop
Lakes, mountain overlooks & western Maine	★ Day 2 – Western Maine Lakes & Mountains Loop
Short scenic outing	Route 26 west from Errol to Dixville Notch and return
River & woods outing	Route 16 south through Thirteen Mile Woods and return
Longer road trip	Use Errol as the overnight link between scenic regions

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Where Is the Best Color Right Now?

The Great North Woods is usually New Hampshire's first region to reach peak foliage. Maine's official foliage program places Rangeley and Bethel in western Maine's Zone 5, which typically peaks around the second week of October. Those are historical patterns, not guarantees, so use the live reports to decide which direction looks best during your stay.

Day 1 – ★ Great North Woods Fall Foliage Loop

Approximate loop distance: 120 miles. New Hampshire's official Great North Woods scenic-drive route follows essentially this same circuit; beginning in Errol simply changes where you enter the loop.

ROUTE FROM ERROL

- Take NH Route 26 west from Errol through [Dixville Notch](#) to Colebrook.
- In Colebrook, take US Route 3 south along the Connecticut River corridor toward Groveton.
- In Groveton, take NH Route 110 east through Stark toward Berlin.
- From Berlin, take NH Route 16 north through Milan and Thirteen Mile Woods back to Errol.

This is a true loop: leave Errol through [Dixville Notch](#) and return from the south along Route 16.

Why This Drive

Visit NH's official route highlights the scenic Route 26 stretch through [Dixville Notch](#), the Connecticut River corridor, Stark, Berlin, Milan and the forested ride through Thirteen Mile Woods. The variety makes this a good first fall drive from Errol.

Best Stops Along the Loop

- [Dixville Notch](#) & Lake Gloriette – Route 26 passes through the notch with dramatic mountain scenery; [Visit NH](#) specifically highlights the Lake Gloriette view during Fall.
- Baby Flume – New Hampshire State Parks says this waterfall is less than 0.1 mile from roadside parking in [Dixville Notch State Park](#).
- Colebrook – A practical place to stop for fuel, food or a break before continuing south.
- [Stark Covered Bridge](#) - [Visit NH](#) identifies the bridge, Ammonoosuc River and white-steepled village setting as one of the Great North Woods' classic fall photo stops.
- [Nansen Wayside Park](#) in Milan – A quiet Androscoggin River stop at the base of the historic [Nansen Ski Jump](#).
- [Androscoggin Wayside Park](#) – A scenic river stop inside Thirteen Mile Woods, useful for a picnic or simply slowing down before the final stretch back to Errol.

OPTIONAL DETOUR – BEAVER BROOK FALLS WAYSIDE

From Colebrook, [Beaver Brook Falls Wayside](#) is on Route 145. The state park has a scenic picnic area and waterfall setting. Treat it as an optional out-and-back detour, then return to Colebrook to continue the main loop.

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Day 2 – ★ Western Maine Lakes & Mountains Foliage Loop

Approximate core loop distance: 122 miles. From Errol, this scenic loop follows Route 26 through [Grafton Notch](#) toward Bethel, Route 2 to Rumford, Route 17 to Oquossoc, and Route 16 back to Errol.

ROUTE FROM ERROL

- Take NH/ME Route 26 east and south from Errol through Upton and [Grafton Notch](#) toward Newry and Bethel.
- Take US Route 2 east from the Bethel area toward Rumford.
- Take ME Route 17 north from Rumford toward Oquossoc.
- At Oquossoc, take ME Route 16 west toward the New Hampshire border and continue to Errol.

The 122-mile figure refers to the core loop. Optional side trips or additional stops will add distance and time.

Why This Drive

This loop combines two of western Maine's strongest foliage landscapes. Route 17 passes through the [Rangeley Lakes Scenic Byway](#) corridor and its [Height of Land](#) overlook, while Route 26 returns through [Grafton Notch State Park](#) and the [Grafton Notch scenic corridor](#).

Best Stops Along the Loop

- Screw Auger Falls – A Route 26 roadside stop in [Grafton Notch State Park](#); Maine specifically promotes the park's waterfall pull-offs as fall picnic stops.
- Mother Walker Falls – A short walk from Route 26 to a deep gorge within [Grafton Notch State Park](#).
- Spruce Meadow Picnic Area – A picturesque park stop overlooking marsh habitat and Old Speck Mountain.
- [Height of Land](#) – The signature Route 17 overlook across Mooselookmeguntic Lake and the surrounding mountains, with parking directly at the overlook.
- Coos Canyon – A natural break along Route 17 between the Rangeley area and Rumford.
- Oquossoc – The Route 17/Route 16 junction where the loop turns west toward Errol.

OPTIONAL RANGELEY SIDE TRIP

From Oquossoc, continue east on Route 4 if you want to visit Rangeley village, then return to Oquossoc before taking Route 16 west to Errol. Because this is outside the 122-mile core loop, allow additional distance and time.

Short on Time? Scenic Drives Close to Errol

You do not need a full day to experience fall around Errol. These out-and-back options keep the focus close to town.

Route 26 West - Dixville Notch

Drive Route 26 west through the changing forest toward [Dixville Notch](#). Lake Gloriette, Baby Flume and the notch scenery make this the strongest short foliage drive if you want mountains and waterfalls without committing to the full Day 1 loop.

Route 16 South - Thirteen Mile Woods

Follow Route 16 south along the Androscoggin through Thirteen Mile Woods. Stop at [Androscoggin Wayside Park](#) or continue toward Milan before turning back toward Errol.

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Route 26 East - Umbagog & Western Maine

Route 26 east from Errol passes wetland and lake country on the way toward the Maine line and Upton. It works well when you want a quieter drive with water, marsh and forest scenery.

Route 16 North - Umbagog & Western Maine

Route 16 north follows a remote lake-and-forest corridor toward western Maine. Turn around whenever the day's color, weather or available time tells you to.

BUILD THE DAY AROUND THE COLOR

If the brightest foliage is west of Errol, choose [Dixville Notch](#). If it is south, choose Thirteen Mile Woods. If western Maine is showing stronger color, favor Route 16 or the Day 2 loop.

Following the Fall Colors? Make Errol Your Overnight Stop

Errol works well as a one-night stop on a longer New England foliage trip because Routes 16 and 26 connect several scenic regions. Arrive through one landscape, spend the night, and continue through another the next morning.

Coming From the White Mountains

Travelers coming from the [White Mountains](#) can work north through Gorham and Berlin, then follow Route 16 through Milan and Thirteen Mile Woods to Errol. If your trip includes the [Kancamagus Highway](#), North Conway or Pinkham Notch, Errol makes a logical northern overnight before continuing toward [Dixville Notch](#) or western Maine.

Coming From Western New Hampshire or Vermont

Travelers following the Connecticut River corridor can work north toward Lancaster, Groveton and Colebrook, then approach Errol on Route 26 through [Dixville Notch](#).

Coming From Western Maine

From Bethel and Newry, Route 26 runs north through [Grafton Notch](#) toward Upton and Errol, making the motel a natural overnight stop before continuing into northern New Hampshire.

Coming From Rangeley / Oquossoc

From Oquossoc, Route 16 runs west through remote lake-and-forest country to Errol. Spend the night, then leave the next morning through [Dixville Notch](#), Thirteen Mile Woods or another direction.

A SIMPLE MULTI-DAY STRATEGY

Arrive from the [White Mountains](#) or western Maine, stay in Errol, then continue the next morning through a different foliage corridor. This avoids retracing the same road and turns one overnight into part of the scenic trip.

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Best Foliage Photo Stops

Mountain + lake	Lake Gloriette / Dixville Notch
Covered bridge + village	Stark Covered Bridge
River + forest	Thirteen Mile Woods / Androscoggin Wayside Park
Wide mountain panorama	Height of Land
Waterfall + foliage	Baby Flume or Screw Auger Falls
Marsh + mountain	Spruce Meadow Picnic Area

Fall Driving & Trip Planning

- Check the current foliage report before leaving. Peak timing varies from year to year and can differ between northern New Hampshire and western Maine.
- Fall daylight is shorter. Allow time for scenic stops, photos, meals and slower traffic.
- Mountain weather can change quickly. Carry layers and rain protection even when the morning starts clear.
- Watch for wildlife, especially around dawn, dusk, wetlands and forest edges.
- Fuel and services are more spread out on rural portions of the loops. Top off before long remote stretches.
- Cell service may be limited in remote areas. Download your route and carry a backup navigation option.
- Roadwork, leaf-covered pavement and wet leaves can affect driving conditions. Slow down when conditions warrant.
- Park only in designated or safe legal areas. Never block a roadway, bridge or private access for a photograph.

Make Errol Your Fall Foliage Base

Errol Motel puts you at the junction of Routes 16 and 26, with two very different full scenic loops available from the same home base. Stay for two nights and explore both northern New Hampshire and western Maine or use Errol as a one-night stop while following the changing colors through New England.

Our 11-room, family-owned motel offers on-site parking and easy access to restaurants, groceries, fuel and outdoor supplies in town. Reservations are made directly by phone or email.

ERROL MOTEL	RESERVATIONS
132 Main Street Errol, New Hampshire 03579	603-482-3256 errolmotel@gmail.com errol-motel.com

Follow the color. Make Errol part of the drive.

Fall Foliage & Scenic Drive Resources

Visit NH - Great North Woods Scenic Drives

Official route description for the approximately 120-mile Day 1 circuit.

<https://www.visitnh.gov/things-to-do/scenic-drives/great-north-woods>

Visit NH - Foliage Tracker

Current and typical fall-color timing for the Great North Woods and other New Hampshire regions.

<https://www.visitnh.gov/plan-your-trip/fall/foliage-tracker>

NH State Parks - Dixville Notch State Park

Official information for Baby Flume and Dixville Notch State Park.

<https://www.nhstateparks.org/find-parks-trails/dixville-notch-state-park>

NH State Parks - Beaver Brook Falls Wayside

Official park information for the optional Colebrook-area waterfall detour.

<https://www.nhstateparks.org/find-parks-trails/beaver-brook-falls-wayside>

Maine Fall Foliage

Official weekly Maine foliage reports and interactive map.

https://www.maine.gov/dacf/mfs/projects/fall_foliage/index.shtml

Visit Maine - Height of Land

Current visitor information for the signature Route 17 overlook.

<https://visitmaine.com/articles/height-of-land/>

Maine DACF - Grafton Notch State Park & Mahoosuc Public Lands

Official park guide with roadside waterfalls, gorges and picnic stops along Route 26.

https://www.maine.gov/dacf/parksearch/PropertyGuides/PDF_GUIDE/grafonmahosucguide.pdf

Errol Motel is not affiliated with or endorsed by the organizations listed above. Mileage is approximate, foliage timing varies by year, and road or park conditions can change. Check current foliage reports, weather, road conditions and posted information before your drive.